DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 146 585 CS 203 422

AUTHOR McCracken, H. Thomas
TITLE A Graduate "Program" in English Education Is More Than Courses.
PUB DATE Mar 77
NOTE 39p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Conference on English Education (15th, Knoxville, Tennessee, March 24-26, 1977); Not available in hard copy due to marginal legibility of original document

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 Plus Postage. HC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Annotated Bibliographies; *Composition Skills (Literary); Course Content; English Departments; *English Education; *English Instruction; Evaluation; *Graduate Study; Higher Education; Newsletters; Program Evaluation; *Summer Workshops

ABSTRACT

This document consists of six separate items: (1) a description of graduate courses in English education at Youngstown State University; (2) an outline for a summer workshop on the teaching of writing; (3) the welcoming letter sent to workshop participants, which includes the list of required readings; (4) a summary of workshop participants' evaluations of the workshop; (5) a newsletter published by the Youngstown State University English department; and (6) an annotated bibliography of works that deal with the evaluation of written composition. The bibliography lists more than 100 articles, books, papers, reports, and dissertations. (GW)

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A Graduate "Program" in English Education is More Than Courses

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H. Thomas McCracken

Professor of English and Sec. Ed.

Youngstown State University

CEE 1977

Knoxville, Tennessee

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CS 203 422

A Graduate "Program" in English Education is More Than Courses

Inservice work includes workshops, newsletters, information to area teachers which shows them that the university Education or English Department cares about their teaching. While my central purpose in this workshop is to discuss a particular workshop in writing I conducted in the summer of 1976, using that description as an example of some of the obvious things we should be doing in English Education, 1977, I include in this file further items which support the program in English Education. I ask you whether you think these examples represent what we should be doing in English Education, whether at the master's or doctoral levels.

Enclosures

1. "Graduate Courses in English Education"
2. Letter to "Summer Workshop Participants," including texts
3. "Revised Schedule" for Workshop on The Teaching of Writing
4. "An Annotated Bibliography for Composition Teachers"
5. Summary of Evaluation of Workshop by Participants (letter)
6. "English Newsletter"

CEE 1977
Knoxville, Tenn.

H. Thomas McCracken
Professor of English
Youngstown State University

Graduate Courses in English Education

Youngstown State University

As with any block of course offerings, graduate courses in English Education have two influences on the rest of the program for an M.A. in English: a) they draw English teachers from high schools into the degree program and b) they compete with other course offerings in English during a given quarter. These contrary functions act as a stimulus in the department for discussion of purpose and philosophy. Most obviously, course offerings suggest what a department considers important. English Education is one of nine components in our M.A. degree. The other eight are rather typical categories: British Medieval Literature; British Renaissance Literature; British Eighteenth Century Literature; British Nineteenth Century Literature; British Twentieth Century Literature; American Literature; Linguistics.

The courses in English Education, with appropriate numbers and academic doublespeak for descriptions (mostly my own, although all descriptions must be witten in sentence fragments, presumably an act of rebellion against the schools and freshman composition traditions):

* 906. Teaching of Literature. Approaches to literature, including student responses, useful to the classroom teacher. Goals and strategies for teaching and analyses of sample practices. (4 q.h.)

* 907. Teaching of Writing. Problems, issues, practices and research which affect the teaching of writing at various grade levels and in beginning college courses.

908. Children's Literature. Classic and contemporary literature of interest to the adolescent. Development and trends; emphasis on critical standards and use in the classroom.

908. Adolescent Literature. Classic and contemporary literature of interest to the adolescent. Development and trends; emphasis on critical standards and use in the classroom.

957. Practicum in Language Arts. Analysis and techniques for teaching the language arts through video-taped lessons of high school and middle-school teachers: examinations of concepts of learning through various approaches, and in the context of research in the language arts. Practical approaches to the teaching of language, writing and literature.

* 1050. Workshop in English Education. (May be repeated once) Examination of particular problems and issues in teaching of writing.

* 1051. English Education. (May be repeated once) Theories of language study or literature study applied in the context of teaching English.

Some of those titles and descriptions may sound odd, but they are what will work for my institution. And they get to teachers in my geographical location.

Question: Do these reflect what an English Education program should look like at the M.A. level?

H. Thomas McCracken

*-official approval forthcoming

SUMMER WORKSHOP

English 905: The Teaching of Writing

June 28 - July 2

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

Purposes

1. Share your techniques, assumptions and knowledge about writing and the teaching of writing with others in the workshop;

2. Learn about other techniques and assumptions, including conclusions from research and descriptions of certain formal and informal approaches;

3. Examine certain assumptions and practices in evaluating writing, especially student writing;

4. Produce a short, written overview of a writing program to be used in your own classroom, based upon what you found useful in the workshop--a "Program Project"

Preparation

1. Read descriptions of certain approaches and positions in the teaching of writing (to provide all of us with some common reference points). These materials may be purchased at the University after June 1.

2. Write a short description of one technique, assignment or happening which you have actually used in the teaching of writing. If you select an assignment you have given, attach one student paper as a typical response to the assignment. Type on a ditto and make 30 copies for distribution on the first day (if needed, we can make copies at the University).

Tentative Schedule

Monday

9-10: Welcome and introduction of participants; overview of materials available for the week.

10-12: We'll ask each participant to give a brief description (2-3 min.) of his/her department or school writing program and the particular problems in the teaching of writing faced by teachers in his/her school system.

1-2: Sharing of descriptions of a lesson or assignment brought in by each participant; brief presentations and discussion.

2-3: Presentation: What general approaches should we know about (emphasis on rhetoric, on language, on personal)?

3-4: Discussion of end of week writing program to be written by participants ("Program Project").

Tuesday

9-10: Presentation: Issues in the teaching of writing: An overview, with sources
a) Bidialectalism; b) CCCC Statement; c) Doublespeak; d) Theories of language acquisition; e) Problems of Usage

10-12: Discussion about various approaches and issues above.

1-2: An overview of other approaches and issues: Writing considered as Process & Product

2-3: Discussion of application/practice with above approaches.

3-4: Presentation: a review of certain practices in the teaching of writing as described in recent journal and articles and monographs.

Wednesday

9-10: Criteria for evaluation of writing; description of certain scoring techniques; National Assessment results.

10-12: Evaluation of student papers (ETS samples); making an essay assignment.

1-3: Writing: Write an essay assignment; in 45 minutes write a response to an assignment (not your own); discussion of responses.

3-4: Work on "Program Project"

Thursday

9-10: Problems in devising programs discussed; assumptions, audience, student involvement built into such a program (emphasis on Program Project);

10-11: Presentation: Approaches with a language orientation, with a rhetoric orientation, and with a personal orientation. (references--texts we have read);

11-12: Presentation: overview of various program suggestions from texts on the subject (methods texts on language and composition).

1-2: Evaluation of student papers and discussion.

2-4: Open.

Friday

9-12: Program Projects distributed and discussed.

1-2: Presentation: Ways of dealing with external effects of writing programs: class load, community concerns, parental concerns, etc. State organizations--

2-3: Presentation: Follow-up procedures, ways the University English Dept. can be of help; classroom visitations, etc.

3-4: Conclusion: Assessment and written evaluation of workshop by participants.

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO 44555

The College of Arts and Sciences

June 3, 1976

TO: Summer Workshop Participants

FROM: Dr. H. Thomas McCracken
Dr. Barbara Brothers
Dr. Gratia Murphy

We are very pleased to have you as a participant in English 905: The Teaching of Writing this summer from June 28 - July 2. The information and reminders below may help you to have a more worthwhile week.

Perhaps the most important reminder is the reading list for the workshop. The following books and journals may be purchased at the University Bookstore in Kilcawley Center. They should be available by June 14, perhaps earlier:

Janet Emig, The Composing Processes of Twelfth Graders, NCTE Research Report #13, 1971
Paul B. Dierderich, Measuring Growth in English, NCTE, 1974
Additional reading:
College Composition and Communication, 36 (May, 1975)
College Composition and Communication, 27 (May, 1976)
English Journal, 64, no. 3 (March, 1975)
Students' Right To Their Own Language, NCTE pamphlet

Total cost for the six items is approximately $12.00. Bookstore hours from June 14:

June 14, 15, 16--8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
June 17, 18, 21, 22--8:00 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.
June 23, 24, 25--8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

The Bookstore is not open Saturdays during this time-period.

Our opening session will be held in Room 239, Kilcawley Student Center. Afternoon sessions for the week will be in Maag University Library, 6th floor. A resource center will be available in Room 238, Kilcawley Student Center, and will be open 8-5:30 daily during the workshop. Note the enclosed directions to the University and the campus map. Parking will be free for participants in the workshop. This letter may serve as your parking ticket for the first day. Lunches for the workshop may be purchased at the Snack Bar in Kilcawley or at nearby campus locations.

We also want to remind you to bring your 30 copies of a lesson or assignment you have given in writing to share with other participants. You will note on the revised schedule (enclosed) that we have scheduled that session for Monday afternoon. If you need copies of your presentation made, we can have that done when you submit the original Monday morning.

We look forward to working with you.

Encl: Directions to University, Revised schedule
Campus map, List of participants

Post-July 2, 1976

To colleagues (elementary, middle, senior high, college) who participated in the Workshop on the teaching of Writing, June 28-July2, 1976.

From: Tom McCracken, YSU

Because participants seldom see the evaluations done on a class or a workshop and because we all agreed that this was a very worthwhile workshop, I have summarized the responses on the attached pages. I admit that I would have been reluctant to do this if the whole session had received less than a strongly positive response. I should stress, too, that good planning and intentions can all be for naught if participants don't pitch in and struggle with the issues and problems. All of us made this session work because we all saw its importance and wanted it to work.

I was pleased with the results. I think that we made a beginning by this comprehensive overview. I agree with those who feel that a one-week follow-up session next summer for the same participants, but centering on a few issues in the teaching of writing in depth, would be the best strategy. Dr. Brothers, Dr. Murphy and I also felt that a repeat of this workshop (incorporating your suggestions for change) for perhaps 25 other teachers would also be useful. We'll let you know whether we can work out the logistics. Also, we are considering a Newsletter and I wish to ask for any short pieces you would care to send--anything on the topic of writing. I'll leave it that vague for now.

The attached pages contain the following:a) full responses to question #1; b) sampling of responses from questions #2 and #3, combined; c) tabulation of question #4; d) eight excerpts from question #5. The questions are repeated before each set of responses.

Dr. Brothers and Dr. Murphy have already begun plans for NEOTA day and you'll be hearing from us concerning that program as well.

Comments from evaluation of the Workshop on Writing

Ques. 1: In what specific way or ways can the English department be of aid to your department? or to you as an individual?

a. ". . . I would very much like to keep an open avenue of communication more often than maybe once or twice a year. Possibly, one or more of you could come to our schools to explain how vital it is to and English department to set goals and have some cohesiveness.

b. "To give support for the standards discussed this week, specifically to help us concentrate on ideas, content and de-emphasize mechanics and grammar."

c. "You have all already helped me very much and I hope I will be able to take some of the information back to my colleagues. I only wish all of the staff would have been present." (this writer meant her own staff)

d. "I would like help in getting a writing lab set up in my school district. . . . A workshop of sorts to enlighten school administrators to our problem in teaching writing."

e. "If I need help, may I call you?"

f. "Reinforce our thinking (actions?) about certain ideas gleaned from this workshop--for example, the little correlation found between the teaching of grammar and the ability to write and speak well."

g. "Sponsor programs, conferences for such events as NEOTA Day, etc. or such as KSU's KEDS program (extended over several days). Be available to conduct in-service programs for high school English departments, particularly to help introduce controversial issues such as Diederich's. Disseminate materials, information to the schools, where they can be further disseminated to individual teachers."

h. "I think it would be beneficial for you to come to an inservice day and speak to our English department. I, personally, would like to attend more workshops for graduate credit, rather than the different classes [currently offered]."

i. The department has helped through NEOTA Day and by providing speakers for our inservice days. Individually, I have taken courses that were helpful. I'd like to know what English courses are being offered on the graduate level in the near future. Newsletters sent to schools don't always reach the teachers and certainly not the junior high teachers!"

j. "I find workshop days during the school year to be inspirational and a stimulating experience. Last year the day at which Sheridan Baker spoke was very informative."

k. "The department could in some way be a resource for local inservice or workshop days. I would like to receive communication about further workshops, courses, etc. on writing."

l. "I would like to see more graduate courses offered which pertain to teaching. More workshops of this nature would be excellent. In other words, more on the practical, less on the intellectual."

ques. 1, cont.

m. "By just being as you are--sponsoring workshops, NEOTA days, etc. I wish I could get my school's department to some of these things as a group."

n. "Dr. Brothers said it--a newsletter. Also, the department helps greatly in the area of resources."

o. "Representatives could acquaint the staff and administrators with the value of stress on a writing lab. As an individual, I would like to have as guest speakers, some members of the English Department. Make it compulsory for English teachers to attend a writing workshop."

p. "For my department: knock some sense into their heads; for me: as a resource center on focal points for advice and aid. . . and as a source of inspiration and encouragement."

q. ". . . can be of aid to my department as a source of information and initiator of new ideas on what we talked about at this workshop."

r. ". . . by offering instructors, materials, and new ideas as resources. I would also appreciate the offering of more inservice sessions and valuable workshops such as this one."

s. "For my school, you might educate them in the manner of lifting their Victorian standards. Your department can be of future aid to me in providing me with new ideas and helping me with my own professional situation."

t. "Prepare a formal statement of your philosophy of writing and your views as expressed at this workshop and send them to my English Department."

u. "Be available for inservice programs in our schools. . . or be willing to come to our defense when we run into opposition to some of these ideas."

Ques. 2: If we were to repeat this workshop for others, what would you suggest we omit? change? add? (and Ques. 3 on a follow-up for this workshop)

Omit? Almost all of you said that you would omit "absolutely nothing;" however, five of you said that you would omit at least part of the comment on the bibliography during the first morning. I regard that as an especially useful criticism. In the future, we will try to comment on the issues and concerns facing the profession, using the bibliography sparingly as a way of highlighting the issues. It certainly doesn't make sense to make an annotated bibliography, then further annotate it in such laborious fashion. Dr. Murphy and I discussed this after reading your comments.

Change? Most comments alluded to another workshop as a follow-up. Others said
Add? that more depth in certain areas (this depended upon individual concerns) such as journalism, more scoring and grading of papers, more material should be brought in by secondary and elementary teachers. Many positive comments were made here about the planning of this workshop. One suggestion: use Friday morning for using the resource center. Two or three responses indicated that Friday morning wasn't used as well as it might have been. Most of you indicated that you would like a follow-up, one week session next summer. The general tone was "anything you can give us," but now more depth and less breadth.

Ques. #4: Would you be willing to lead a small discussion group on NEOTA DAY at YSU?

Eleven of you gave an unqualified yes; 10 said no, or qualified yes.

Ques. #5: Further comments on the workshop:

The responses here were an overwhelming support of the workshop. I have selected eight examples to represent the tenor of the remarks. Only two or three of the examples are complete, as I excerpted to give an overall view.

a. "This workshop has served the purpose I had hoped it would. It has provided me direction--and specifics--for the course I will be teaching in the fall."

b. "I really enjoyed it! The material presented was worthwhile. This is my first workshop and I loved meeting people and becoming closer to them than is usually possible."

c. "This is the most valuable and well-planned workshop in which I have ever participated. Daily activities were so varied and stimulating that I am leaving with many new concepts about theories in the field as well as many practical activities which I can use with my classes."

d. "I enjoyed the workshop immensely and got so much out of it. I'm still trying to sort through it all. There was a fantastic degree of variety presented and at no point was I disinterested or bored. . ."

e. "This has been the best and most beneficial grad. course I have taken at YSU."

f. "I was uncomfortable when I came because I did not think there would be any place for intermediate level teachers. I found I could adapt most of the ideas. I especially welcomed the theory because I could apply it to my own situation."

g. "I liked the combination of both theoretical and practical presentations. I felt torn at times about not being able to pursue many things in more detail. I LOVED this week."

h. "I think it has been marvelous. There is no other way I could have been exposed to so many ideas--I feel bombarded, but there will be time to sort through, apply and evaluate. I appreciate the tremendous amount of time the YSU staff has spent in order to conduct the workshop. Also, the participants contributed such a wealth of valuable material. Thank you."

(and the YSU staff feel that the participants made the workshop: everyone here thoroughly enjoyed themselves)

T.M.

AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF BOOK , ARTICLES, REPORTS, PAPERS, AND DISSERTATIONS ON THE EVALUATION OF WRITTEN COMPOSITION

English Department
Youngstown State University
Summer, 1977

Prepared with the help of the Educational Resource Information Center

ARTICLES

Adler, Richard. "Writing behind Walls." English Education, 6 (April/May, 1975), 234-42.

This article describes a program the author instituted teaching inmates in corrective institutions in a writing program. Because these students were special in many ways, the system the author used for evaluating their work is particularly interesting.

Bain, Robert. "Reading Student Papers." College Composition and Communication. 25 (October 1974), 307-09.

Bain asserts that as composition teachers, we need to learn to stop evaluating the student writer's values and assumptions, and rather, evaluate what he does working from those assumptions.

Ballowe, James. "ADE-Bradley Conference on the Politics of CLEP and Other Equivalency Examinations: A Report." ADE Bulletin, 38 (September 1973), 26-28.

A report on the dilemma of equivalency testing and its ramifications for college composition programs.

Beach, Richard. "Self-Evaluation Stat egies of Extensive Revisers and Nonrevisers." College Composition and Communication, 27 (May 1976), 160-164.

A study of the revision procedures undertaken by students who rework and rewrite their compositions and those who do not.

Berse, P. "Criteria for the Assessment of Pupils' Composition." Educational Research, 17 (November 1974), 54-61.

The focal point of this investigation is the viability of different forms of assessing the quality of compositions written by ten to eleven year olds.

Blake, Robert W. "How to Talk to a Writer, or Forward to Fundamentals in Teaching Writing." English Journal, 65 (November 1976), 49-55.

Blake argues that we must learn how to "talk to" the writer, or, in other words, to learn to look upon writing as communication from a sender to a receiver.

Bowers, Thomas A. "Teaching Tips: Better Way Found to Mark Papers in Writing Classes." Journalism Educator, 28 (April 1973), 22-26.

A journalism teachersexplains his particular method for evaluating the written work of students.

Brosnahan, Leger. "Getting Freshman Comp All Together." College English, 37 (March 1976), 657-660.

Brosnahan argues that in-class reading of students' writing should be the entire business of freshman composition class meetings.

Carkeet, David. "How Critics Write and How Students Write." College English, 37 (February 1976), 599-604.

Literary critical prose is a specialized, artificial mode of discourse, argues the author, and therefore it is a poor model with which to present students who are trying to learn to write well.

Cohen, Arthur H. "Assessing College Students' Ability to Write Compositions." Research in the Teaching of English, 7 (Winter 1973), 356-371.

Cohen proposes a way of conducting a research project that involves the teachers and provides a reliable grading scale for evaluating the college students' ability to write compositions.

Cooper, Charles R. "Research Round-Up: Oral and Written Composition." English Journal, 64 (December 1975), 72-74.

A review of significant contributions to research about evaluation methods, oral communication, and other areas of study in composition.

Cowan, Gregory. "Tests and the New Student: A Question of Fit." ADE Bulletin, 6 (September 1975), 44-47.

Examines long-held assumptions and raises questions about the practice of using tests to evaluate the performance and abilities of students taking English composition.

"Cross-Grading: An Experiment in Evaluating Compositions." Collge Composition and Communication, 27 (February 1976), 52-55.

The benefits of a system in which the papers of each instructors' students are graded by another instructor are described.

Dieterich, Daniel J. "Composition Evaluation: Options and Advice." English Journal, 61 (November 1972), 1264-71.

Discusses the problems faced by composition teachers in evaluation and makes suggestions.

Dixon, Edward A. "Syntactic Indexes and Student Writing Performance." Elementary English, 49 (May 1972), 714-6.

Based on a paper delivered to NCTE in 1971, this article attempts to correlate students' syntactic structures with writing peformance and evaluation.

Dubois, Jessie J. "Rise Up Red Pencil, Right On." Language Arts, 53 (September 1976), 666-667.

This article urges teachers to write constructive comments on students' compositions.

Duienhefer, John Paul. "An Experiment in Grading Papers: Staffroom Interchange." College Composition and Communication, 27 (December 1976), 406-407.

A study of a experimental technique of grading papers after they were returned to students for corrdtion, instead of before they were returned.

Ellman, Neil. "Peer Evaluation and Peer Grading." English Journal, 64 (March, 1975), 79-80.

A plea for peer evaluation of student composition.

Etaugh, Claire, and Suzanne Rose. "Adolescents' Sex Bias in the Evaluation of Performance." Developmental Psychology, 11 (September 1975), 663-664.

This study examined adolescents' evaluations of short articles which differed in sex association of the content and the author's sex. Findings indicated that the subjects differentially evaluated the performance of males and females. Both sexes were perceived as having expertise in different areas. However, female achievements were devalued more frequently than the achievements of males. An interesting connection can be made to the assumptions peers--and teachers--bring to grading.

Garcia, Ricardo L. "A Linguistic Frame of Reference for Critiquing Chicano Compositions." College English, 37 (October 1975), 184-88.

Examines linguistic problems and principles which teachers of Mexican American students should know.

Girod, Gerald R. "Creative Writing and Behavorial Objectives." Elementary English, 50 (September 1973), 971-76.

Discusses the use of behavorial objectives in teaching creative writing and presents examples helpful to the classroom teacher.

Gracie, William James, Jr. "Evaluating Freshman English Programs." College Composition and Communication, 26 (February 1975), 34-36.

A discussion of the evaluation criteria to be used in assessing the effectiveness of college English programs.

Groff, Patrick. "Does Negative Criticism Discourage Children's Compositions?" Language Arts, 52 (October 1975), 1032-34.

A study which grew out of the NCTE Commission on Composition, dealing with the good and bad effects which negative criticism of student writing brings.

Hartman, Catherine L. "Learning to Describe Behavior." Teacher, 93 (December 1975), 42.

> To carry our effectively conferences or any form of evaluation that supports individualization and promotes growth, the author says it is important to describe behavior rather than make inferential judgments or diagnoses. Suggestions for writing behavior descriptions are made.

Havelsrud, Joyce. "No Wonder Students Can't Write." English Journal, 58 (February 1969), 249-51.

> An article condemning as self-destructive some of the teaching techniques carried on in the name of English education. As the author implies, some learning goes on in spite of, not because of, teacher practices.

Hillerich, Robert L. "A Second Evaluation of Written Language." Illinois School Research, 7 (Winter 1971), 28-31.

> A study involving student evaluation of written composition and its implications for teaching of secondary school writing.

Hipple, Theodore W. "The Grader's Helpers--Colleagues, Peers, Scorecards." English Journal, 61 (May 1972), 690-93.

> Suggestions, viable and concrete, for evaluating students' work in English composition.

Jerabek, Ross and Daniel Dieterich. "Composition Evaluation: The State of the Art: An ERIC/RCS Report." College Composition and Communication, 26 (May 1975), 183-6.

> Recent research on the effects of different ways of marking student compositions is reviewed.

Kantor, Ken. "Evaluating Creative Writing: A Different Ball Game." English Journal, 64 (April 1975), 72-4.

> The author reviews and describes criteria for judging creative writing of students, which he sees as different from the "usual" criteria.

Kehl, D.G. "An Argument against Abolishing Freshman Composition." College English, 32 (October 1970), 60-65.

> A satirical recounting of the benefits of maintaining a required course in written composition for college freshmen.

Klammer, Enno. "Cassettes in the Classroom." College English, 35 (November 1973), 179-180, 189.

> Sketches a method of using cassette cartridges to correct college freshman compositions.

Kline, Charles R., Jr. "I Know You Think You Know What I Said." College English, 37 (March 1976), 661-662.

Kline, Charles R., Jr. "I Know You Think You Know What I Said." College English, 37 (March 1976), 66162.

Instructors send different messages to students in their course structure and in their evaluation of students' papers. The aut or reviews and discusses what we say, even when we don't realize what we are saying.

Knapp, John V. "Contract/Conference Evaluations of Freshman Composition." College English, 37 (March 1976), 647-53.

Explores the concept of contract grading set up with students in conference meetings.

Macrorie, Ken. "Percival: The Limits of Behaviorism." Media Method Explorations of Education, 6 (March 1970), 45-6.

Discusses the "dehydrated" manner of producing writing which is fostered by English teachers' evaluation standards. This article was prompted by an examination by Macrorie of a research report, "The Analysis of Essays by Computer," sponsored by the University of Connecticut at Storrs.

Martia Dominic. "Point and Counterpoint: A Response to 'Grade Beans Not Themes.'" English Education, 2 (February 1970), 45-8.

A defense of grading, engendered as a response to Abraham Blinderman's essay, "Grade Beans, Not Themes," which appeared in English Education, 1 (Spring, 1970), 159-165.

Maugham, Reese P. "Learning through Self-Involvement in the Evaluation of Written Effort." Education, 92 (April-May 1972), 63-8.

Appraisal of almost all the written accomplishment of the day should hardly be regarded solely as the teacher's prerogative, says the author; rather, this responsibility rightfully rests with the one for whom the learning is intended.

Maxwell, John C. "National Assessment of Writing: Useless and Uninteresting?" English Journal, 62 (December 1973), 1254-57.

The author points out flaws in the current National Assessment of Writing model and its results, but he concludes that the National Assessment is a step in the right direction.

McDonald, William U., Jr. "Grading Student Writing: A Plea for Change." College Composition and Communication, 26 (May 1975), 154-8.

The author argues that written descript ons of student accomplishments on papers should be required to supplement letter grades.

Moslemi, Marlene H. "The Grading of Creative Writing Essays." Research in the Teaching of English, 9 (Fall, 1975), 154-61.

Procedures are described which yielded very high inter-judge reliability in grading creative writing.

Platt, Michael. "Correcting Papers in Public and Private." College English, 37 (September 1975), 22-7.

Correction and discussion of student papers in small teacher-led groups is an effective alternative to the teacher's reading and correcting all papers, says the author. A mixture of both styles of grading is recommended.

Purdy, Dwight H. "A Report on an Ungraded Composition Course." College Composition and Communication, 26 (May 1975), 204-6.

We may need to make students more, rather than, less, anxious about writing, affirms Purdy, if we wish to see results of improvement in their writing.

Putz, Joan M. "When the Teacher Stops Teaching--An Experiment with Freshman English." College English, 32 (October 1970), 50-57.

An experiment described more fully in the author's dissertation, "The Effectiveness of Non-Directive Teaching as a Method of Improving the Writing Ability of College Freshmen," prepared at New York University. Putz makes the point that when teachers interfere too heavily with the writing processes of students, particularly through constant adverse criticism, the students' work suffers.

Rupley, William H. "Teaching and Evaluating Creative Writing in the Elementary Grades. An ERIC/RCS Report." In Language Arts, 53 (May 1976), 586-90.

The often thorny problem of how to teach --and grade-- creative writing efforts of younger students is discussed in this report. Resource materials and teaching suggestions are included.

Slotnick, Henry B. "On the Teaching of Writing: Some Implications from National Assessment." English Journal, 62 (December 1973), 1249-53.

Lists four categories into which the findings of the National Assessment of Writing fall: Useful and Interesting, Useful and Uninteresting, Useless and Interesting, and Useless and Uninteresting. See the article by Maxwell for an answer to this categorization.

Snider, Sarah J. "Let Them Bleed." Elementary English, 50 (September 1973), 969-70.

Cautions teachers not to judge novice writers too harshly because in the initial stages writing is an expression of self. Biting criticism of work is therefore interpreted as criticism of the person.

Smith, Vernon H. "A Do-It-Yourself Test: How Do You Rate as a Judge of Children's Writing?" Elementary English, 47 (March 1970), 346-48.

This test was developed as part of the author's doctoral study at the University of Colorado in 1966. See also Whalen's article listed in this bibliography for an application of the test devised here.

Smith, Vernon H. "Measuring Teacher Judgment in the Evaluation of Written Composition." Research in the Teaching of English, 3 (February 1969), 181-95.

Discusses study testing the validity and reliability of elementary teachers' evaluation of students' written essays; Form A of a test is appended. This essay was based on part of the author's doctoral study at Colorado.

Stoehr, Taylor, and others. "Writing about Experience: A Report on Freshman English." College English, 32 (October 1970), 9-44.

Descriptions of the activities in various sections of an experimental course in freshman English during the fall semester of 1967 at State University of New York at Buffalo.

Stoen, Don. "Stuttering Pencils." English Journal, 65 (November 1976), 40-41.

Students should write more and be encouraged more in their writing, says the author. Our criticism often makes their pencils "stutter."

Stewart, Donald C. "A Cautionary Tale: 'The Unteachable Subject.'" Change, 8 (November 1976), 48-51, 63.

A historical review since the late 1800's suggests that criticism of studentwriting ability has been a perennial problems and that similar reasons for it have been cited for nearly a century.

Stewart, Donald C. "Essays, Analysis, and--Better Writing." Research in the Teaching of English, 3 (Spring 1969), 42-51.

The author here summarizes a report made on text content, evaluation, and writing exercises.

Strauss, Gerald J. "Encouraging Dialogue in Freshman Composition." Journal of English Teaching Techniques, 7 (Summer 1974), 26-28.

Describes a technqiue for involving students in a written dialogue with their instructors via the papers that form the core of the composition program.

Turchyn, Judith Whelan. "The Separation of Form and Content: Teaching Literature in the Two-Year College." Teaching English in the Two-Year College, 1 (Winter 1975), 107-09.

Suggests that a separation of the grammar (form) and ideas (content) in teachers' evaluations of their students' writings on literature must be maintained.

Wagner, Eileen N. "How to Avoid Grading Compositions." English Journal, 64 (March 1975), 76-79.

The author affirms, on the basis of research done by her, that other methods of evaluation be undertaken besides the grading of compositions in order to arrive at student evaluation of work.

Warnock, John. "The Relation of Critical Perspectives to Teaching Methods in Composition." College English, 34 (February 1973), 690-700.

The author studies methods of evaluating student writing and relates these methods to teaching procedures.

Whalen, Thomas E. "A Validation of the Smith Test for Measuring Teacher Judgment of Written Composition." Education, 92 (November-December 1972), 172-5.

The purpose of the present study was to determine to what extent the results of Smith's test (see entry in bibliography) can be generalized to other essay-rating situations.

Britton, J.N. and others. "Multiple Marking of English Compositions: An Account of an Experiment." Schools Council, London, 1966. Available from Pendragon House, Redwood City, California.

An experiment was conducted to find a better method of marking English compositions. In this method, each composition was assessed independtly by three markers who judged the general impression of the writing, andby a fourth marker who applied a code of penalties for mechanical errors. Brief written instructions were provided to the impression markers prior to the experiment. Results of this experiment were compared with the examiners' marking of General Certificate of Education "O" level compositions carried out by the Cambridge Board. The comparison showed 1), the marks were more reliable, as shown by greater agreement by two teams of markers; 2) the marks agreed more consistently with the examinee's estimate of his writing ability; and 3) since the value of a piece of writing is to a considerable degree a matter of opinion, the method provided an all-round v iew of the writer's performance in a subjective task. Further improvements are also suggested, and lines of further inquiry indicated.

Brown, Lurene. "High School English in Reprospect." NCTE , 1963. 4 pp.

Observations directed primarily toward future teachers of English concern a 10 year investigation of freshman student attitudes toward their second school English training. Based on the patterns of responses evident in the anonymously written student criticisms, the author notices three critically weak areas: High school English classes are not sufficiently well disciplined to allow for satisfactory achievement; composition assignments are too infrequent and too poorly planned; and grading systems are unrealistic, causing students to feel they are accomplishing more than they are. A generous selection of student criticism supports the study.

Burns, R.A. "A Theme Check-Form Method of Evaluation and Instruction." Paper presented at CCCC, March, 1976.

The rationale and uses of a checklist for ev luating essays from a second semester college composition course are described. The checklist has 23 yes/no items organi ed by subject: content, organization, and mechanics. A scoring rubric assigns 30 points to content items and 10 to each of the others. Copies of the checklist and of an earlier research version are included.

California Association of Teachers of English, "A Scale for Evaluation of High School Student Essays." NCTE, 1960. 33 pp.

Designed to provide a scale for assessing the quality of short expository essays, this material includes a group of six expository essays about 250-300 words arranged in order of quality. Each essay is followed by critical comments and a general discussion of the characteristics of essays at that level of quality. No validity or reliability data are reported.

Clark, William. "An Evaluation of Two Techniques of Teaching Freshman Composition. Final Report." Office of Education, 1968. 53 pp.

Two techniques of teaching composition were studied: one involving extensive written comments on papers, the other involving the use of one class period per theme for discussion of two or three of the themes submitted for that assignment. The study was carried on at the USAF Academy and involved four teachers teaching four sections each. Each teacher used one technique for a section, the other technique for the second, both for the third, and none for the fourth. Evaluation of four out-of class themes was done by independent evaluators. No reliable evidence was found to indicate that the two techniques, used singly or in combination, were superior to instruction which offered students no guidance for improving their writing.

Cohen, Elaine and Mary Poppino. "Self-Pacing in Reading and Writing Programs: What Does the Future Hold?" 1975, 10 pp. Paper presented at Western College Reading Association, California, 1975.

Paper describes self-paced reading and writing program, where students work through learning packets of reading and writing assignments. The writing packets reinforce idea of writing, conferring, and revising until the desired grade level has been achieved.

Danielson, Robert W. "Composition in the Two-Year College: or 'Nothing So Needs Reform as Other People's Habits.'" 1966, 11 pp. Paper presented at Pre-Convention Study Group of NCTE Convention, 1966.

In sections 1 and 2 of this paper, the value of five administrative practices and attitudes and ten instructional practices and attitudes is questioned. Section 3 discusses the preparation and continuing education of two-year college English instructors, and section 4 emphasizes the need for research in composition.

Edwards, Thomas O. "An Objective Evaluation of Expository Essays." 1975, 8 pp.

This article proposes an objective model for evaluating written compositions. The instrument consists of an outline which breaks down various elements of composition and provides a numerical ranking system for their separate evaluation.

Elbow, Peter. "A Method for Teaching Writing." NCTE, 1968. 11 pp.

This short paper proposes to teach writing from the hypothesis that true writing and good prose are only end products rather than the primary objectives. The author suggests that producing an effect in a reader and revealing the self are prior achievements in the process of learning to write. Criteria for judging writing are based on an attempt to achieve empirical class judgment.

Fisher, Lester A. and Donald M. Murray. "Perhaps the Professor Should Cut Class." Paper presented at NCTE, 1971. 1971, 18 pp. Paper originally entitled "Get Back on That Log."

A study using a non-traditional format to teach composition. There were no class meetings in this course, but only conferences. The text was the student's writing. Each student was given a question and answer sheet, a brief style guide, and a "writer's checklist." The students wrote weekly and conferred with the teachers weekly. It was felt that the conference method produced better writers, was easier and less time-consuming on teahers, and that the studentsgained confidence.

Lanberg, Walter J. "Evaluating and Increasing the Effectiveness of Instruction in Writing." 1975, 12 pp.

This study tried to apply a set of questions for students engaged in writing narrative to use in selecting subjects, developing rough drafts, and making additions to expand the narratives. Of the 27 students who engaged in the program, the majority found the approach helpful.

Langlois, Kathryn. "English Composition by a Comparative Method Using an Operationally Defined Theme Evaluation Technique. Final Draft Report." Sponsored by Office of Education, 1970. 39 pp.

The study used two groups of composition students: one group learning by a traditional class method with professional essays for readings; the other group used student themes (one well-done, one poorly done) for class discussion before their own writing. Results showed that the comparative method yielded better results, especially in teaching rhetorical types like definition, classification, etc. but less satisfactory results in other themes such as illustration.

Lindell, Ebbe. "Composition in the Intermediate Stage of the Comprehensive School." Stockholm School of Education, 1971. 8 pp.

This new letter summarizes language research in composition, writing skills and linguistic usage carried out over a three year period (grades 4,5,6) with a sample of Swedish students. Subjective assessment of student compositions was done.

Macrorie, Ken. "Filling the Subjective Spaces." 1971, 3 pp.

Teaching techniques that induce high school and college students to write subjectively as well as objectively are discussed and illustrated with examples.

Marzano, Robert J. "On the Validity of Analytic Ratings." 1975, 7 pp. Study conducted at University of Colorado at Denver.

The purpose of this study was to examine the reliability of the analytic method of grading in relation to the holistic method. The conclusion was that the analytic method produces a higher reliability among raters than the holistic, but that the analytic produces a lower validity for the grades on the papers than the holistic.

McDonald, W.U. "What Do We Do When We Do What We Do--and Should We?" 1974, 9 pp. Paper presented at CCCC, 1974.

McDonald says that grade symbols alone are inadequate for indicating quality of work and reflect only one instructor's opinion. He suggests instead that a teacher should read and react to papers, recording reaction, and indentifying inappropriate words and phrases, followed by a summary of overall strengths and weaknesses. A viable and preferable solution would be a written statement included with the assigned "grade."

Pannwitt, Barbara. "Putting It in Writing: Some Notes on the Teaching of Composition." 1976, 13 pp. Study sponsored by National Association of Secondary School Principals, Virginia.

This study examines some of the issues and practices currently receiving attention in schools: shift in instruction as elective and required courses are examined, evaluating instruction in writing, advice to students on writing process, critical comments for guidance rather than grading, and "sentence-combining" techniques for instruction. The report also discusses writing assessment, and included are brief descriptions of twelve innovative high school writing programs.

Sager, Carol. "Sager Writing Scale." 1973, 39 pp.

The Sager Writing Scale is designed to assess the quality of pieces of creative writing in intermediate and junior high grades. The SWS contains four scales with four ratings possible in the areas of vocabulary, elaboration, organization, and structure. Validity of the SWS is claimed based on an examination of over one thousand pieces of children's writing.

Sager, Carol. "Improving the Quality of Written Composition through Pupil Use of Rating Scale." 1973, 15 pp. Paper presented at NCTE, 1973.

This study had students in the sixth grade in two suburban Boston schools taught writing in two methods: one where the students used the SWS (described above) for themselves to critique their own and their peers' papers, and one when the scale was used by teachers only. The students who used the scale showed dramatic improvement and higher schores, thus proving the SWS effective for student use.

Sawyer, Thomas M. "Accountability: Or Let Others Grade Your Students." 1975, 16 pp. Paper presented at CCCC, 1975.

Sawyer argues that teachers need to be accountable to others--that is, to people in the community and in the profession the student is studying. He would invite teachers from other departments to read student papers, as well as people from the community and in the profession. Also, video-tapes of classroom activities should be available for viewing by people of the community.

Shepherd, T.R. "Self Concept and Self Evaluation--Writing: Strands and Strategies for Describing, Prescribing and Evaluating the Task." 1976, 16 pp. Paper presented at National Conference on Language Arts in the Elementary School, 1976.

The paper describes the composition classroom and modifications in teaching methods which must be made by teachers for various changes. The conclusion is that tailoring the writing experience and providing an evaluative framework for each student resuls in better understanding of tasks, more accurate self-evaluation, and therefore improved writing confidence and self-concept.

Smith, Myrna and Barbara Bretcko. "Research on Individual Composition Conferences." 1974, 14 pp. Paper presented at CCCC, 1974.

This study was undertaken to examine the help individual conferences give to the writing student. Results showed that after the first two conferences, the effects of more individual conferencing were minimal, thus suggesting that it is questionable to invest the time in conferences frequently.

Smith, Vernon H. "Composition Rating Scale." 1966, 19 pp. Reprinted from Research in the Teaching of English, Fall, 1969.

The Composition Rating Scale (CRS) requires the taker to rank-order five brief compositions. Requiring twenty minutes to complete, the scale can be used to evaluate the consistency of teacher judgments of compositions, to screen lay-composition readers, or to prepare student teachers.

Sutton, Doris G. "Evaluating Teaching Methods in Composition." 1975, 15 pp. Paper presented at CCCC, 1975.

This study, conducted at Eastern Kentucky University, compared the effects of writing lab help and formal classinstruction on 244 students in the bottom decile in the ACT English test. The instruction methods showed no difference in student attrition, but the study indicated that students in the writing lab programs profitied, especially indicating that transferred writing skills assert themselves after the freshman year.

A Teachers' Notebook: English, 5-9, Volume II. 1977, 80 pp. National Association of Independent Schools, Boston.

Written by a group of English teachers in elementary and secondary independent schools, this volume has three sections: one on evaluation of composition written in class, and two on comprehension of prose and poetry. Samples and analyses of student reponses comprise an important part of this volume.

Wagner, Eileen N. "When the Bookkeeping System Takes Over: The Effects of Grading Compositions on Student Attitudes." 1976, 12 pp. Paper presented at CCCC, 1976.

The point of this paper is that "grades", while they do not appear to have a negative effect on students, do cause problems for the teacher and in effect, force the teacher into justifying the grade by negative commenting. Other systems of evaluation, if necessary, can be used. The important point for the teacher is to have him direct student writing in the most positive fashion allowable.

BOOKS

Allen, Eliot D. and Joseph Sutton. The Effect of Practice and Evaluation in Written Composition. Stetson University, 1964.

This study undertook to investigate the value of peer evaluation for both writing and benefiting from correction of written material. The authors found that students did as well or better from peer evaluation as they did from teacher correction. The authors found too that frequent writing, followed by evaluation, aided students in writing. Thus, teachers are advised to use frequent writing assignments and avail themselves of peer criticism of student work.

Baltimore County Public Schools, Evaluating Written Composition in Elementary and Secondary School (Grades 5,8,11): A Resource Bulletin. 1967, 152 pp. Available from Office of English Language Arts, Baltimore County Public Schools, Algburth Manor, Towson, Maryland ($3.00).

The purposes of this bulletin are 1) to help teachers understand evaluation as a part of writing 2) to establish evaluative criteria which reflect realistic objective for the teaching of writing to students of varying abilities and age groups. Included are "Developmental Activities," "Evaluative Functions," and "Criteria for Evaluation of Written Composition." Each section (for particular three grade levels) contains a general commentary on the writing program for that level, student compositions, analyses of those compositions and paragraph-length commentaries to students. A selected bibliography for composition teaching is included.

Braddock, Richard, and Charles Statler. Evaluation of College-Level Instruction in Freshman Composition, Part II. Iowa University, April 1968, 77 pp.

The University conducted a study to determine which of two methods (analytic or "general impression") was more effective in evaluating written composition, and to see if students who took freshman composition improved in their writing ability more than those students who were excused from the course. Chapters discussing findings, conclusions, and recommendations indicate that the results were inconclusive because the rating of the themes wasnot reliable. Included are extensive tables of data and appendices listing information about and instruction to participants in the experiment.

Corbin, Richard. The Teaching of Writing in Our Schools: A Macmillan Guidebook for Parents. New York: Macmillan, 1966, 118 pp.

This discussion attempts to acquaint parents with the reasons for teaching writing in grades 1-12 and with some of the processes by which teachers guide students in learning to write.

Specific topics include the need for writing, the differences between written and oral language, the ways children learn to write, the topics they write about, the amount of writing they should do, questions of style and usage, testing and grading, and techniques of teaching writing. Ways in which parents can help the child and the school are suggested.

Donelson, Ken, ed. Rhetoric and Composition in the English Classroom. NCTE, 1974, 214 pp.

The emphasis in the essays printed here is on the problems both students and teachers face in the composition programs. Many useful essays, on subjects as varied as "Using Film as an Aid to Creative Writing" to "Transformations and Stylistic Options," are included.

Geuder, Patricia, ed. and others. They Really Taught Us How to Write. NCTE, 1974, 146 pp.

The articles are by teachers judged superior by their students. The articles describe classroom practices, methods, and evaluation procedures that have actually worked for teachers and students alike.

Jones, Hazel J., Winn and Fi eld. English Composition--A College Problem: A Study of the College Preparation of Prospective Teachers of Secondary School English. Western College Association, 1967.

A survey of California programs designed to train secondary English teachers. The conclusion is that courses in written composition, advanced composition, and methods in teaching English (when supervised well) provided sufficient preparation for teachers.

Kitzhaber, Albert. Themes, Theories, and Therapy: The Teaching of Writing in College. Report of the Dartmouth Study of Student Writing. 1963, 185 pp. Available from McGraw-Hill.

A report on the state of freshman composition teaching, along with detailed descriptions of the English program at Dartmouth. Three appendices discuss exemption practices and policies, a bibliography for composition teachers, and examples of two failing themes.

London Association for the Teaching of English. Assessing Comprehension: A Discussion Pamphlet. 1968, 60 pp. Available from NCTE.

The aim of this study was to investiagete the issues involved in comprehension of literary passages, measured by well students could discuss in writing the piece. The work contains sample questions, answers, and comments.

McColly, William. The Dimensions of Composition Annotation. State Univ. of New York Research Foundation, 1965.

A study investigating annotation of themes by teachers, assessing which types of annotation marks and comments prove most beneficial to student writers.

Shaughnessy, Mina. Errors and Expectations. New York: Oxford University Press, 1976.

A guide to the teacher of Basic Writing (developmental, remedial, etc .) students, exploring various areas of error (syntax, vocabulary, spelling, organization, etc.). A valuable introduction and conclusion highlight problems the teacher of Basic Writing students faces in both aiding and evaluating the work of students.

Stewart, Donald C. Essays, Analysis, and--Better Writing. NCTE, 1968.

A study of the nature and utility of essay anthologies designed for use in the composition classroom. A detailed examinations of eight anthologies is included, as well as a selected bibliography and recommendations on content and use of many anthologies.

DISSERTATIONS

Biesbrock, Edieann Freeman. "The Development and Use of a Standardized Instrument for Measuring Composition Ability in Young Children (Grades Two and Three)." Ed.D. Dissertation, University of Georgia, 1968.

Coleman, Virginia Brown. "A Comparison between the Relative Effectiveness of Marginal-Interlinear-Terminal Commentary and of Audio-Taped Commentary in Responding to English Composition." PH. D. Dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 1972.

DePillo, Norman Charles. "The Influence of Handwriting upon Teachers' Evaluation of Children's Creative Stories." Ph. D. Dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1970.

Golub, Lester Stanley. "Syntactic and Semantic Elements of Students' Oral and Written Discourse: Implications for Teachin Composition." Ph. D. Dissertation, Stanford University, 1967.

Holland, Gordon Lewis. "An Analysis of Current Freshman English Programs in Institutions of Higher Education." Ph. D. Dissertation, Michigan State University, 1970.

Martin, Walter Don. "Applying and Exploring the Diederich Method for Measuring Growth in Writing Ability in a High School (Vinton)." Ph. D. Dissertation, The University of Iowa, 1970.

Maxwell, Marilyn Griffith. "The Development and Evaluation of a Test of Certain Expository Abilities." Ed. D. Dissertation, Boston University School of Education, 1969.

Moss, Andrew Ian. "Toward a Rhetoric of Inquiry: A Study of the Theory, Application, and Evaluation of the Interdisciplinary Writing Course." Ph. D. Dissertation, University of California, 1976.

Raven, Frances Ondee. "An Analytic Study of the Essay Test of the Language Skills Examination in the Georgia Rising Junior Testing Program." Ed. D. Dissertation, University of Georgia, 1973.

Resch, Kenneth Edward. "An Analysis of the Effectiveness of Freshman Composition as It Is Taught at Western Illinois University." M.S. Thesis, Western Illinois University, 1972.

Schippers, Lillian Vogt. "Using the Affton Scale of Acceptable Written Expression to Decrease Disparity in Teachers Assigning a Level to Pupils' Written Expression." Ph. D. Dissertation, Saint Louis University, 1974.

Shostak, Robert. "Developing a Technique for Discovering the Rater Policies of Essay Graders." Ph. D. Dissertation, The University of Connecticut, 1969.

Tway, Doris Eileen. "A Study of the Feasibility of Training Teachers to Use the 'Literary Rating Scale' in Evaluating Children's Fiction Writing." Ph. D. Dissertation, Syracuse University, 1970.

Wheeler, Robert Walter. "Self-Transcendence as a Normative Philosophy and Psychology Underlying the Teaching of Literature and Composition." Ph. D. Dissertation, The University of Michigan, 1969.

Dept. of English Fall 1977 No. 2 Y S U

ENGLISH NEWSLETTER

This second Newsletter from the YSU English department aims at continuing the policy of having teachers from the area share professional ideas and research, or just anecdotes about teaching English and language arts. In this issue two teachers speak of a matter close to them and to us: attitudes toward teaching language. I want to encourage responses to either or both pieces, to be published in the next Newsletter. Let me hear from you.

Recently, a colleague explained to me why he thought that it would be instructive and useful for some secondary teachers to teach Shakespeare's history plays (say, in place of the tragedies). I am not aware that anyone is teaching a history play. If you are teaching one or more of the history plays, send in a description of what you do with them in class. And if there is anyone who would like to try an experiment with his/her class by teaching a history play of Shakespeare's, paying attention to the political parallels of contemporary life, we would like to work with you and help develop the course. Anyone interested?

The YSU English department, in an attempt to keep up with the latest research in the teaching of writing, has had four of its own workshops in the last year and a half, including presentations by Elisabeth McPherson, Chairman of the English Department at Forest Park Community College in St. Louis and former Chairman of the Conference on College Composition and Communication and by Charles Cooper, Director of English Education at SUNY Buffalo and co-author of a recent book on evaluation in writing: Evaluating Writing, Cooper and Odell, NCTE, 1977. In January we plan to have a researcher in reading and psycholinguistics visit campus for presentations to the department.

Our Writing Lab on campus now has a full-time coordinator: Mrs. Nancy McCracken (now part-time relation to your editor). She reports that 448 students used the Lab during the first week. I know of only one other writing lab in our territory, that of Austintown Fitch. If you are interested in developing such an aid to your school, we at the University are willing to help in whatever way we can. Also, I am sure Austintown will offer advice as well.

Are you a member of the National Council of Teachers of English? Are you a member of the Ohio Council of Teachers of Language Arts (formerly English Association of Ohio)? If you are interested in joining either or both and cannot find an application blank, call me. You will receive benefits which will help your classes.

Write a description of your first class this fall and I'll publish it in these pages. If you show your students that you practice what you preach about writing, it may help you to convince them.

H. Thomas McCracken
Professor of English
Youngstown State University

* * * * * *

Mrs. Doris Linsley writes me "As you know my attitude towards teaching is not as jaded as this paper suggests." It is not mere gallantry which makes me want to rush to her defense (although that would be reason enough to do so), but rather that I do indeed know her to be optimistic, very knowledgeable in her field, and in fact an outstanding teacher. Nonetheless, she speaks for all of us who, at a given moment of weariness, decry the mish-mash of conflicting professional advice which rises and falls with the tide over the decades.

The Other Side of the Coin

Almost thirty years ago I graduated from a mid-American university with a degree in education. The State of Ohio granted me a four-year provisional certificate to teach English on the secondary level. And I merrily took this magic piece of paper into the "never-never land" of the public school..

With five different preparations I courageously faced over one-hundred-eighty students each day and endeavored to teach them grammar (Standard English); literature (the classics); and precise spelling and punctuation. I manfully (this was before women's lib) insisted upon their attention and their obedience (to my whims). Grammar workbooks and American and English anthologies were my only "media." There was no TV at home and there were no movies in the classroom. We did not "role play," or do group work, or keep journals. Strangely enough the "work oriented" administration thought that I was doing a good job.

At the end of four years the State of Ohio saw fit to renew that magic paper and I continued in my stereotyped pattern of the teacher-oriented classroom. But soon after that I married and upon becoming pregnant retired from "the never-never land" to the "real" world of domesticity and motherhood. But just before my retirement I attended a teachers' meeting at which an enlightened college professor explained the fallacy of teaching grammar. I retired feeling the futility of pointless endeavor for an outmoded goal. One would think that this would have ended my egocentric educational endeavors. But no, like MacArthur, I RETURNED.

A six-year interval had elapsed and grammar had now become almost solely the bailiwick of the junior high. So, not easily defeated, I charged in again. This time, at the seventh grade level, without the workbook, but with sentences constructed by the student himself. (I was using the modern approach.) Again his spelling and punctuation were mercilessly criticized and he was compelled to memorize the "helper verbs" and was chastised for not knowing how to conjugate "drink" in the past perfect tense. Again my superiors seemed to approve of my methods and results. I was even commended by parents and by students, too, a few years after they had escaped my clutches.

Now, a veteran of seventeen years of teaching and the mother of two teen-agers I returned to high school teaching. In my absence Sputnik had frightened American educators into being "tough." A college bound student must know the classical as well as the modern literature. In addition he must be able to research and write logical, well-organized and properly annotated papers. He must develop "vocabulary skills" and in addition, the material "must be relevant."

Feeling inadequate, but dedicated, I studied far into the night to be properly prepared. I lectured on the "five paragraph theme" and preached "thesis statement" to my college bound prodigies. I no longer taught grammar although once in a while I had a relapse and diagrammed a sentence on the board to explain a grammatical error. Finally I had achieved the ultimate in "methods" and "expertise." What more was needed to really "ice the cake?" Only a master's degree in English.

So, at forty-eight I enrolled in a master's degree program to perfect my knowledge and skills. In addition to literature courses that belabored medieval anachronisms and research about the color of the binding of a book printed in 1848, I learned about the theater of the absurd. But I felt that new "methods" should also be part of my "receptive attitude." These courses on methods of teaching really opened my eyes.

I found that my methods had been autocratic and teacher oriented, completely inconsiderate of the students' rights and needs. I mulled this over and I decided that the teaching of grammar had not been successful with all students, so maybe, it should be dropped. I also found that I had been forcing my students to read such literature as The Scarlet Letter and Moby Dick which they did not "like" to read and therefore resented. I should find literature with which the student could "identify." My methods also had not allowed for small group work and the student had not been allowed "to communicate with his peers." In fact he had been "forced" to listen to my lectures. I tried honestly and sincerely to adapt to these new methods and to appeal to the individual student.

I also became aware that my writing assignments were stereotyped and regimented. I had spent hours making red marks on themes believing that I was helping the student to learn to write for college. Now I found that I had really been stifling his "fresh, natural approach" and had "turned him off." I had squelched his creativity by being concerned with his spelling and syntax.

And now - - - the last straw. I had always thought that, at least, we, the student and I, had something in common; we were speaking the English language. But now I find that even this is not true. He has a "right to his own language." I should not force mine upon him or belittle his own way of expressing himself.

I have spent twenty-three years of doing the wrong things. I have taught the wrong materials, with the wrong methods to obtain all the wrong results. I have even contaminated my own flesh-and-blood by fining them ten cents of a twenty-five cent allowance for uttering "ain't." I now have two university educated off-spring who have been indoctrinated with those vile middleclass standards. One, horror of horrors, is a speech teacher.

Those students, admininstrators, and parents who have been foolishly satisfied with my devotion to didactic duty still exist. Worst of all, the State of Ohio after seven renewals of that magic four-year provisional is about to mistakenly grant an eight-year professional certificate to this bumbling bundle of broken dreams.

I am no more than a "supervisor of peer communications." Any well-supervised playground could provide a more rel ed atmosphere for meaningful relationships, at much less cost, and I would suffer

much less stress on my nerves. I have wasted twenty-three years on teaching when I could have spent them on something worthwhile like learning to macramé artistic wall hangings that would make youthful minds meditate upon important relevant trivia. My "never-never land" has been filled with "don't-don't." And to express it in my own "enriched and expressive dialectal pattern," "I don't never want nothing to do with it no more."

Doris Linsley
Poland High School

Mrs. Dorothy Bigby's concise statement will be of interest to all those teachers of minority students, particularly those who ask "Why can't my students learn to talk and write the way I do?" She writes from her own experience and from the history and research in language which she knows well.

Teaching English

> I sit on a man's back choking him and making him carry me, and yet assure myself and others that I am very sorry for him and wish to lighten his load by all possible means--except for getting off his back.
>
> --Tolstoy

A study of Black history and Black dialect must be a vital part of an English teacher's preparation for the job of public education if any advancements and changes in teacher attitudes and techniques toward teaching minorities are to become viable. One cannot teach what one does not understand.

There are far too many English teachers who have no knowledge of Black history and the fact that Blacks were on American shores long before Columbus, also that the first Blacks "traded" here were from the West Indies, not Africa. If the study were complete, a knowledge of Gullah or Geechee, and creole would dispel notions of the Black dialect's origin and its characteristic of being a dialect. Gullah or Geechee is spoken by Blacks living along the South Atlantic coast, particularly in South Carolina and Georgia, and it is a by-product of creole. Creole originally referred to a native of the West Indies, Central America, tropical South America, Georgia, and the islands, and it is related to a person of mixed descent born in America, particularly French and Spanish or a mixture of these with a Black. The creole language was, as the people, a mixed language developed by the Blacks. Creole was a predecessor to Gullah or Geechee, which is a descendant of a plantation creole. To reiterate the original point, William Stewart in his "History of the American Negro Dialect," says Black English is a language, not just a dialect."

Perhaps this concept and knowledge would encourage the English teacher to stop trying to criticize the Black child's speech patterns and grammar usage. When the child omits a suffix on a noun, uses the

same pronoun for the subject and the object, or completely omits a verb in the sentence, this is the structure of his language. It is not incorrect! To Standard English speakers and writers it is a terrible grammatical error, and this is the approach that must be taken by the English teacher. For the teacher this means the Black speech patterns should not be paralleled to laziness, carelessness, or stupidity, nor to bad usage. These are language patterns that have existed for generations, "passed on from parents and peers through a normal kind of language process." (Language and Poverty, p. 363) With this view in mind, the teacher could then get on with the business of teaching the child, not the material, or drilling grammar skills.

One hard, but important task, is to teach the student to use his language because language is only learned through verbal exchange and social interaction. "To improve language performance, a student has to talk, write, or read in school." (Language and Poverty, p. 301) A student will neither talk, write, nor read if he is "turned off" by his teacher's lack of understanding or inability to know where the child is going or where he has been. The student will soon know that language does not make the man, job, success, or failure. Changing his language patterns without being realistic, practical, and aware of his social life is to no avail. If he knows he is shut out of society anyway, there will be no motivation. Here again is where the English teacher's skills and knowledge of Blacks will be helpful. To be able to relate examples and people who believe that Blacks must be able to function in two languages will aid in accomplishing the task. William Labov states in "The Logic of Nonstandard English" that "there are three nonlinguistic barriers to the acquisition of standard English: 1) opposing motivations (to talk like whitey); 2) resistance in the peer group; and 3) teacher-student interaction (which has so biased nonstandard dialect speakers, . . . that they resist any efforts at change . . . particularly under the auspices of school, . . . teachers)" (p. 273).

A student cannot be told to change or substitute his language. Teachers must understand that language is an integral and inseparable part of the self. Teacher and student must consider the change of dialect patterns a process of growth from one language and style of speaking and writing to a versatility in language.

Dorothy Jean Bigby
Warren G. Harding High School

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Have you seen The Idea Factory? It is a newsletter for teachers of junior high and middle school language arts. I have read three issues (Feb., March and Sept. 1977), although there may be more. There are suggestions for teaching, word games, books for students and more. It emanates from the JH/MS Assembly of NCTE. If you are interested in joining that Assembly, send $5.00 to Nancy Broz,

Membership, JH/MS Assembly of NCTE, 7 Treaty Elms, Haddonfield, N.J. 08033.

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REMINDER: The Second Sean O'Casey Festival will be held at Youngstown State University, March 2-4, 1978, sponsored by the Sean O'Casey Review and the YSU English Department and School of Fine and Performing Arts. Requests for Conference registration should be addressed to:

Barbara Brothers, Chairman, English Dept.
Youngstown State University
Youngstown, Ohio 44555

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REPORT ON WYOMING CONFERENCE ON FRESHMAN & SOPHOMORE ENGLISH

Although this school year has just begun, many of us are already thinking ahead to what next summer may hold for professional growth. Perhaps my past summer's vacation (shades of Charlie Brown!) at Laramie would be of interest to you. I attended in July the Wyoming Conference on Freshman and Sophomore English, held on the campus of the University of Wyoming, and based on my very positive reactions, I would recommend the 1978 Conference to you early planners. I found the Wyoming Conference's format especially good. The sponsors of the Conference have, over the six years it has been held, attracted noted consultants (like Peter Elbow, Liz McPherson, Elizabeth Wooten Cowan). This year's especially fine consultants were James Kinneavy of the University of Texas, Robert Scholes of Brown University, and Dee Brock of Dallas Community College. Their job as consultants was to lead us in continuing workshop sessions throughout the week of the Conference. Kinneavy's emphasis was on the Theory of Discourse, on which he has published a "standard" text; Sholes' emphasis was on structuralist criticism, particularly of poetry; and Dee Brock, who has served on many national organizations, worked primarily with testing and with instructional television in writing (she was the producer, writer, and chief actor in one of the country's most successful TV series, Writing for a Reason). In addition to these sessions, panels of teachers met each day, discussing practical matters such as testing and diagnostic procedures, classroom practices, and special interest topics like learning disabilities, remedial concerns, and grade inflation. Not all the "learning" took place in the sessions, however, since the participants lived in the dorms and the discussions went on--sometimes long into the night. The Conference wasn't all work, either; there was the clear-skied and mountain-rimmed beauty of the area, a picnic in Medicine Bow (complete with a barbecue and country

music), and much Western hospitality. A constant theme at this year's Conference was the necessity of involving all grade levels of English teaching in a commitment to both practical and theoretical concerns about composition. A particular effort for next summer's Conference will be made toward increasing the number of elementary and high school teachers at the meeting. The Conference can be "taken" for one hour graduate credit (at very reasonable tuition rates), if you wish. I'd be more than willing to answer questions or share the stuffed folder of notes I brought home with me. Suffice it to say that I'd recommend going West next July for the 1978 Conference.

Gratia Murphy
English Department

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NCTE CONVENTIONS

During the past several years, we English teachers have often described ourselves and been described as a profession "up against the wall," beset by public demands for accountability, increased censorship, and a return to basics in education. Life against the wall, however, hasn't been altogether miserable. In fact, the external pressure of these challenges has pushed us together and has reminded many of us again that we can get important knowledge and support from one another. The pressures, in short, have made us aware that there is a professional life outside the classroom door.

This year two NCTE conventions are exploring this "other" professional life by addressing the theme "Working Together." Both should provide stimulating opportunities to meet and share ideas with colleagues. Below are brief descriptions of the two.

1) NCTE National Convention, New York City, November 24-26. Elementary, secondary, and college English teachers will "work together" in New York to explore virtually every aspect of English teaching in over 140 program sessions, an "idea exchange" workshop, roundtable discussions, and informal coffee hours. Several distinguished teachers and authors will address the convention also, including Paul Zindel, playwright and author of novels for and about adolescents; Madeline L'Engle, author of many popular books for older children; Thomas Middleton, columnist for the Saturday Review; and Philip Lopate, author of a book of reflections on teaching poetry to young children. Actors Ossie Davis and Ruby Dee will speak at the Annual Banquet.

   Those interested in more information on the 1977 National Convention should write to Convention Information, 1111 Kenyon Road, Urbana, Illinois 61801.

2) NCTE Secondary School English Conference, Dallas, April 7-8, 1978. The Secondary Section will also explore the theme of "Working Together" at its annual conference. Currently, organizers of the conference are soliciting proposals from teachers for program presentations. Presentations should identify a "claim" about the teaching of English at the secondary level and should give illustrations or evidence to support that claim. Most presentations are done by teams of two or three persons. Proposals for the Secondary Section Conference should be sent to Ms. Marguerite Caldwell, 2820 East 6th Street, Tucson, Arizona 85716.

Gary Salvner
English Department

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REMINDER: To be offered Winter Quarter, 1978 -- English 957*, Practicum in Language Arts, Instr. Dr. Gary Salvner. Course will meet on Tuesdays, 7:20 p.m. - 10:10 p.m. For more information, contact Dr. Salvner, YSU English Dept., 746-1851, ext. 261.

*Identical to Education 957.

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The members of Dr. Carol Gay's Summer '77 graduate class in Children's Literature (908) compiled a textbook for the course as a class project that might be of interest and value to anyone teaching on junior or senior high level. Titled Becoming a Reading Specialist: An Approach to Children's Literature, it has commentaries and analyses on dealing with Children's Literature in the classroom. It was designed to give the members of the class a vehicle for expressing their ideas and focusing their reading and to place in their hands at the end of the course a reference work and bibliography they could use in their own classrooms. Its main value is its extensive book lists and annotated bibliographies of novels for the adolescent reader (seventh through twelfth) and its bibliographies of books of professional and scholarly interest to the teacher. It is on reserve at the Maag Library and at the Media Resource Center in Elm Street School; you might find it helpful in a field that is just beginning to get attention. Although the bibliographies were compiled just last summer, they are right now being updated and will be kept current.

Carol Gay
English Dept.

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the fate of any true culture is revealed in the value it sets upon the teacher and the way it defines him.

--WILLIAM ARROWSMITH